

**Program Charter
for
Financial Services**

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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Program Description

The Financial Services (FS) <http://www.corporateservices.noaa.gov/~noaa/cfohome.html> program supports the NOAA Chief Financial Officer who provides NOAA with budgeting and finance services in the areas of identifying, acquiring, defending, and monitoring NOAA's budgetary resources, as well as providing accounting services and maintaining NOAA's financial system, the Commerce Business System (CBS).

The FS program develops overall budgetary guidance, reviews proposals, and prepares supporting justification and documentation, including coordinating and preparing NOAA budget submissions to the Department of Commerce, Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and the Congress. These submissions include data on budget authority obligations, outlays, permanent positions, and full-time equivalent (FTE) employment.

The FS program develops accounting guidance, processes and records accounting transactions, ensures NOAA's financial statements and reports accurately reflect NOAA's fiduciary status, and manages NOAA's annual financial statement audit. It operates CBS to ensure NOAA managers have access to timely financial data necessary to make informed programmatic decisions. It uses Business Process Reengineering to identify opportunities for improving financial and administrative services.

FS falls under the Program Support sub-goal of the Mission Support Goal. FS supports all Mission Goals, through communication and collaboration between NOAA's Line and Staff Offices' budget, financial management and program liaison staff and the Headquarters, Germantown, and field office Budget and Finance Offices' staff.

2. PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS

A. Requirement Drivers:

Legislation:

- Budget and Accounting Act of 1921 outlines the requirements Federal agencies

must follow when submitting the President's Budget to Congress.

- The Congressional Budget Act of 1974 requires Federal agencies to implement proper allocation and control of the execution of all budgetary resources.
- The Chief Financial Officer's (CFO) Act of 1990 requires Federal agencies to prepare annual financial statements that are subject to audit.
- Budget Enforcement Act of 1990 defines how Federal agencies will spend appropriations.
- Government Performance and Results Act of 1993 (GPRA) requires Federal agencies to integrate strategic planning with program performance planning and reporting.
- Federal Financial Managers Improvement Act of 1996 requires all agency financial management systems to comply with Federal financial management system requirements, Federal accounting standards, and standard general ledger.
- Prompt Payment Act of 1999 requires Federal agencies to follow specific guidance on processing payments in the Federal Government.

Regulation:

- OMB Bulletins 01-09 and 97-01 provide the form and content for preparing agency financial statements.
- OMB Circular A-11 provides an overview of the budget process and defines the guidelines and reporting requirements for preparing, submitting and executing the Federal budget. It also discusses the basic laws, terms and concepts that regulate the budget process.
- OMB Circular A-123 defines management's responsibility for internal control in Federal agencies and strengthens the requirements for conducting management's assessment of internal control over financial reporting.
- Other OMB Bulletins and Directives provide guidance for reporting properly on appropriations and other resources provided to the Federal Government.
- Treasury Regulations prescribe the U.S. Standard General Ledger, reporting requirements, and regulations on processing accounting transactions.

Policy Decision:

- Department of Commerce Accounting Principles and Standards provide specific Departmental accounting principles and standards.
- Department of Commerce Budget Handbook defines Departmental budget policy.
- Federal Accounting Standards Advisory Board Standards provide generally-accepted accounting principles and standards for all Federal agencies.
- NOAA policy guidance, directives and Administrative Orders, including the Annual Guidance Memorandum that outlines NOAA's programmatic and managerial priorities to achieve NOAA's Strategic Goals.

B. Mission Requirement:

Ensure NOAA has in place budgetary and financial policies, standard operating procedures, and financial systems that allow NOAA to produce clean financial statements, plan and execute the current year budget, and support future budget requests. The above Mission Requirement is in support of all Requirement Drivers.

3. LINKS TO THE NOAA STRATEGIC PLAN**A. Goal outcomes:**

The FS program directly supports the Mission Support outcome: A safe operating environment with efficient and effective financial, administrative and support services.

B. Goal Performance Objectives:

The FS program supports the following Mission Support Goal Objective: Improve efficiency and performance in the processing of financial and administrative transactions and services.

C. Goal Strategies:

Financial Services supports the following Mission Support Goal Strategies: Implement a Planning, Programming, Budgeting, and Execution System to enhance NOAA's capabilities and to guarantee effective delivery of needed products and services, and adopt a functional Management Model to deliver administrative and financial services that will establish direct lines of accountability from headquarters business line managers to all NOAA financial and administrative staff located in the field.

4. PROGRAM OUTCOME(S)

Effectively supports the mission goals and programs that touch every NOAA employee, manager, stakeholder and beneficiary by developing overall budgetary guidance, monitoring NOAA's budgetary resources, providing accounting services, and managing financial obligations to establish informed programmatic decisions.

5. PROGRAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

This program is established and managed with the procedures established in the NOAA Business Operations Manual (BOM). Responsibilities of the Program Manager are described in the BOM. Responsibilities of other major participants are

summarized below:

A. Participating Line Office, Staff Office and Council Responsibilities:

1. NOAA Line and Staff Offices are responsible for:
 - Preparing the required budget justifications for the programs that align to the base program line item with the enhancement requested.
 - Preparing and presenting the budget estimates aligned to both the budget structure and strategic plan goals.
 - Presenting the budget estimates to the Chief Financial Officer of NOAA as well as the Deputy Under Secretary of NOAA.
 - Making the necessary revisions according to NOAA Budget Office guidance and decision documents throughout the process. This includes final NOAA senior management decisions, final Department of Commerce decisions, and final Presidential decisions.
 - Responding to ad hoc questions from budget reviewers throughout the entire process, as coordinated and directed by the NOAA budget office.
 - Preparing appeals, as necessary, following senior management decisions.
 - Allocating, obligating and expending resources in accordance with Allotment and authorizing legislation.
 - Responding to reporting requirements on execution of resources.
 - Reviewing accounting reports to ensure obligations and expenditures are accurate.
 - Initiating requests for adjustments to obligations.
 - Completing Certification of Obligations in accordance with NOAA Administrative Order 203-34.
 - Responding to monthly, quarterly and end of year financial reporting requirements to ensure financial statements are accurate.
2. Program Planning and Integration/Office of Strategic Planning and the Office of Program Analysis and Evaluation are the “planning” and “programming” segment of NOAA’s Planning, Programming and Budgeting Process, and are responsible for communicating, collaborating and coordinating with the NOAA Budget Office to ensure the successful implementation of NOAA’s Strategic Plan.
3. Chief Financial Officer/Chief Administrative Officer Council is the decision making or recommending body of NOAA wide financial and administrative functions. Topics for Council decision and/or recommendation to the NOAA Executive Panel (NEP) include:
 - Funding centralized services and/or direct bills;
 - Financial aspects of any presentation to be made to the NEP or the NOAA Executive Council;

- NOAA-wide financial and administrative policies; and
 - Budget matters.
4. Other NOAA Councils and Committees are responsible for evaluating budget justifications to ensure consistency with current directions or decisions made by the Councils and Committees. These reviews must be submitted to the NOAA Budget Office prior to decision meetings with the Deputy Under Secretary.
5. NOAA's Goal Program Managers are responsible for identifying changes in service requirements for budget and financial support consistent with new or changing program initiatives, and relating those changes to the Financial Services Program Manager prior to incorporating in the current Planning, Programming and Budgeting Process.
6. NOAA's General Counsel is responsible for providing legal services necessary to enable Financial Services to discharge its functions.

B. External Agency/Organization Responsibilities:

NOAA and other Department of Commerce (DOC) bureaus are partners in the functionality and use of the Commerce Business System (formerly CAMS) for accounting and financial data and reporting. DOC is responsible for developing, disseminating and implementing policies and procedures governing the maintenance and use of NOAA's accounting system.

6. END USERS OR BENEFICIARIES OF PROGRAM

Financial Services touches every NOAA employee, manager, program, stakeholder and beneficiary by providing for the efficient and effective utilization of its resources to meet NOAA Strategic Plan. Users gain an understanding of NOAA programs and funding as detailed in the President's Budget submission and other supporting documents. Users have access to timely and accurate budgetary and financial information to make decisions, and have their data and communications reviewed for consistency and accuracy so interactions with budget decision makers are positive. Users receive timely allocations of funds allowing ample time to plan and obligate. External Vendors will benefit when prompt billings and payments are made allowing effective management of their resources.